

# CRUSADER CONNECTION

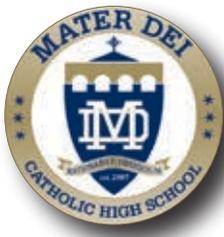
Fall 2017  
Vol. 10 No. 2

A publication dedicated to the Marian/Mater Dei Catholic High School Community



2017 Graduate Serving as Role Models to our  
Mater Dei Juan Diego Academy Students

[mdchs.net](http://mdchs.net)



# MATER DEI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



## BY THE NUMBERS

**99.5%**  
Attending College

**80%**  
ATTENDING  
4-YEAR UNIVERSITIES



**70%**  
Involved in Athletics  
**90%**  
Involved in Extracurricular Activities



**67%**  
Faculty with Advanced Degrees



**760**  
STUDENTS

**22.6** Average Class Size **AND** **16:1** Student/Teacher Ratio

**\$2.5 MILLION**  
Awarded in Tuition Assistance

**\$1.1 MILLION**  
Awarded in Scholarships

**60%**  
Students Receiving Tuition Assistance

**91**  
College Prep Courses



**16**  
AP Courses



**12**  
Honors Classes



**94**  
UC Approved Courses



**47%**  
Taking AP/Honors



**74%**  
Passing Scores on AP Exams



**2**  
College Courses Offered on Campus



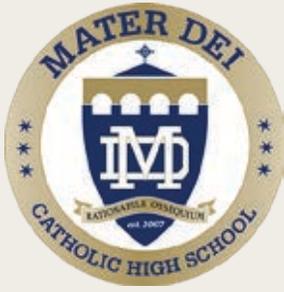
**185**  
National Honor Society Members

**191**  
Academy of Science Students

**100%**  
Academy of Science Students That Attend 4-Year Universities



**15**  
VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS COURSES



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# A LOOK FORWARD TO THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

## PRESIDENT JOHN REY



We are very excited to begin a new school year having experienced some big successes from 2016-2017. Last year, we welcomed our largest 9th grade class and graduated one of our most accomplished senior classes in our 57 year history!

Throughout the past year, the leadership team spent countless hours developing our core purpose (why we exist), core values (how we behave) and strategic anchors (how we will succeed).

**Core Purpose:** Inspire and educate the hearts, minds, and souls of our students.

**Core Values:** Dedicated, Spirit of Service, and Smart (Emotional Intelligence)

**Strategic Anchors:** High Student Fulfillment, High Four Year College Acceptance Rate and Accessible

Our dedicated faculty and staff were honored in April when MDCHS received the Re-Imagine Catholic Schools Award for recognizing the needs of the 21st century student.

Mater Dei Catholic High School is committed and dedicated to providing the best Catholic education possible.

We realize that we must continuously innovate to remain competitive.

A few of the changes that we will be implementing in 2017-2018:

- With our partner, Cuyamaca College, one new college class on campus: Geography 130: Introduction to Human Geography & Globalization
- A new entrepreneurial class
- A new college readiness class which will include SAT and ACT prep for our second semester juniors
- Technology and Social Media internships on campus
- A new Advanced Placement Physics Class – AP Physics C

We will once again welcome the largest freshmen class in our history this August. We look forward to another great year at Mater Dei.

## PRINCIPAL GEORGE MILKE

I welcome you to what we expect will be an outstanding 2017-2018 school year. We are honored to continue the Crusader tradition within a true Catholic educational environment, which began in 1960 as Marian Catholic.

Our achievements from last year were rather spectacular. Graduates of the class of 2017 are matriculating to some of the most prestigious universities like MIT, Notre Dame, West Point, UC Berkeley, UCLA, UCSD, UC Davis, USC, SDSU, USD, and University of Arizona.

We crowned two CIF Champions in Football and Girls Basketball, with other sports winning league banners. We are thrilled that 90% of our student body participates in co-curriculars which echoes our motto, "Mater Dei Catholic is a place for everyone".

We continue to revel in the success of our Science Academy. With 200 students actively engaged and 75 of those receiving internships throughout the county.

Our Aquinas Center for Learning provides opportunities and services for our students with special needs in a caring and compassionate fashion. In addition, our Language Academy provides academic support for those who need an assist.

We have been blessed at Mater Dei Catholic. Our beautiful campus and facilities, our safe and secure environment, our diverse student population and academic rigors, our family atmosphere and last but not least our ability to express and foster our Catholic Faith.



We thank our parents and guardians for allowing Mater Dei Catholic the privilege to assist in your son's or daughter's journey educationally, spiritually, athletically and socially.



## “LOVING JESUS IN OTHERS” FACULTY RETREAT

This year, a team of seven teachers and head of Campus Ministry Chris Schnitzius, created a faculty service retreat titled, “Loving Jesus in Others.” “The objective was to serve within the community, and to understand our role as servant leaders,” said Mr. Schnitzius.

Mater Dei’s faculty and staff went to St. Paul’s senior center in Chula Vista, where they were welcomed into every aspect of the residents’ day. They initially gathered to celebrate Mass and have a talk about servant leadership. Afterwards, teams of faculty

and staff broke out into different groups. Some went to a picnic lunch with memory



impaired patients, while others had lunch with more challenged patients who weren’t

as mobile. There was an entertainment group who conducted a piano concert and sing along, an art group, a gardening group and an exercise group. There was also a group of faculty that catered lunch for the PACE low-income seniors off site and visited with them.

“We were very pleased with the fruits of this day, and our ability to break from our service at Mater Dei to focus ourselves on the larger community and see the big picture of giving back to others,” Mr. Schnitzius added.



# THE UNIVERSALITY OF MATER DEI

The word “Catholic” means universal. It means taking care of our neighbors and our environment. It means being open and respectful of students who come from varied socioeconomic, religious, and academic backgrounds.

As a Catholic school, Mater Dei offers all-school liturgies, sacraments, annual class retreats, daily prayer opportunities and a Theology curriculum to help students understand the Bible and the doctrines of the Catholic faith.

According to Theology Chairperson Anamaria Anthony, “Regardless of a student’s background or religious affiliation, Mater Dei promotes a close-knit, welcoming community that supports the individual at all levels – mentally, physically and spiritually. We start by building a strong foundational freshman Theology class focused on sacred scripture that students from various faith backgrounds can appreciate.”



As students progress, they learn more about Church studies and the Sacraments. “Every year before the first liturgy, we take all students by class into the chapel and present the meaning of the Mass and the Eucharist,” explains Campus Ministry Teacher Chris Schnitzius. “For some, it is the first exposure to faith, church, or worship. Our theology teachers provide ongoing formation so students can be comfortable attending all-school liturgies.”

Mater Dei offers 14 liturgies each year, celebrated by various pastors throughout the San Diego Diocese in an effort to connect students back to their parishes. In November, at the Thanksgiving Mass, every pastor in San Diego is invited to join the Mass celebration and have lunch with students.

Juniors and seniors have an opportunity to grow deeper in faith and leadership by serving as campus ministers. Junior campus ministers



*“One of the things I’ve loved most about my experience at Mater Dei has been going on retreat,” said Shelby Finch, a Junior Campus Minister who was born and raised Catholic. “The one I liked the most was Sophomore year. It was about loving yourself. During high school, you start to question and look down on yourself. This retreat gave me a refreshing perspective. I have also enjoyed following in my sisters’ footsteps and becoming a Campus Minister. During Campus Ministry, we sometimes sing songs and go into the chapel to meditate. It’s really nice to have a break from all of the academic studies and get refocused. I love Monday Adoration, where we get to sit quietly, talk to God, and ask Him for help!”*

*“Mater Dei is my first experience going to a Catholic school,” said Junior Roman Flores, a non-denominational Christian. “At first it was a little bit awkward, but once you get involved you understand that we are all growing together. The theology teachers are amazing. I’ve been very supported in my faith journey, with many people I can go to if I have questions.” Roman added, “I joined Campus Ministry this year and I’m very excited to develop deeper relationships with students who share the same values and are in-tune with what is happening today on and off campus. Going to Adoration was new for me. I have come to appreciate how it allows each of us to take time out of our busy schedules to focus back on Jesus and talk to Him.”*

are trained to lead prayer services; promote daily virtue meditations; act as lectors, Eucharistic ministers, and altar servers; as well as help with Catholic Schools Week and other events. Senior campus ministers are trained to be retreat leaders for underclassmen.

Each class has an opportunity to attend an annual retreat, which has a different theme and focus to help students understand who they are, how precious they are to God, and how to live faith-filled lives as adults. “In the past, we have looked at various social issues such as bullying, peer pressure and the importance of loving yourself and loving others,” added Mr. Schnitzius. “This year

we will incorporate more service learning opportunities into our retreat offerings.”

Throughout the year, Campus Chaplain Father Gustavo provides about 175 students with spiritual direction, whereby he meets with each of these students for 15 minutes once every two months to check in with how they are doing spiritually and to answer any questions they may have.

“No matter who you are or where you come from, Mater Dei is big enough to help each student find that place to stand and be comfortable to grow, learn and find other like-minded friends to interact with,” stated Mrs. Anthony.



## THEOLOGY CLASS HELPS SENIORS FIND THEIR PASSION

“Every Catholic High School has their personality,” explains Mrs. Anamaria Anthony, Theology Chairperson. “One of the ways that we have established ours is through the Christian Call Passion Project.”

The Passion Project is a one-unit course that every senior is expected to complete before graduation in order to gain a deeper understanding about themselves and their potential field of interest. The students must find a mentor to shadow that works in a desirable industry.

To begin, students write a proposal which includes research of the particular industry, they interview their mentor and then define what they will be doing over their 10-hour shadowing experience. Students are also expected to write a practicum report and keep a log of what their experience was like.

After completing their paper assignments, students present their experience to a panel of seniors studying the same industry. These presentations are open to mentors and family members, and are a testament to how Mater Dei invests and helps prepare their students for the future. From this experience, comes a variety of insights as some students confirm their plans to pursue the industry they studied while others decide that career or industry was not for them after all.

These projects are extremely eye opening to the students and their families. The students are able to see what life is like away from school and also assess if the industry they chose to research was something they enjoyed. It also leads to internships, and in some cases jobs, for many students before they go to college.

Teachers and mentors can help students find ways to incorporate faith into work life by discussing and modeling that behavior.



“There is a 13-year transitional period when an adolescent grows into adult life, and although that change can be challenging in many ways, Mater Dei tries to establish a basis of how to embrace it,” said Ms. Anthony. “The Passion Project is one of those ways.”

## THE SUPPORT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

Sitting in a classroom waiting for your turn to present in front of peers, family members, a mentor and a teacher who is grading you on a project in which you have invested hours can be a stressful experience. Although it is difficult to rid some unavoidable nerves that come with public speaking, there is an overwhelming amount of support in the classrooms at Mater Dei.

Throughout these presentations, students are given the utmost respect and attention from the audience and panel. The audience engages in the process by filling out a feedback form on the overall

presentation, what the student did well, how they could improve and advice for the future. This feedback is only one of the ways that support is demonstrated. After one presentation has been completed, there is a ten-minute break for the audience and the upcoming presenter.

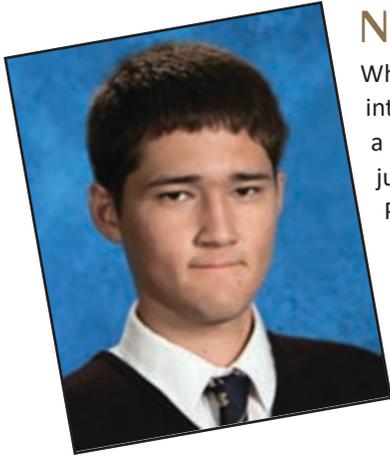
During this break, the classrooms are filled with laughter, congratulations, and encouragement. There is a feeling of community that cannot be overlooked as the students interact with each other, their teacher and their families. This type of support and personalized attention is one of the many aspects of Mater Dei



Student Luis Cerna with Mentor Salvador Villarruel, Banco Nacional de México SA.

that will help lead the students to success after high school.

# MATER DEI STUDENTS ALREADY BLAZING A TRAIL TO THEIR FUTURE



## NIKOLAS CARLONE

When Nikolas gets older he hopes to go into law enforcement. To prepare for such a rewarding and challenging field, this junior is currently enrolled in the Explorer Program with the San Diego County Sheriff's Department. This program is broken up into three different phases that are both physically and mentally demanding. One of only 20 students in all of San Diego, Nikolas completed the Introduction Phase of the program in March 2016.

He continued on to complete Phase 2 in the summer of 2016, where he learned how to deal with domestic violence scenarios and run the SWAT course. He will continue on to Phase 3 this summer, which focuses on leadership skills and involves active shooter and riot training. Once Nikolas completes his third phase he will be awarded for finishing this rigorous program. "My goal is to finish high school next year, go to college first, and then apply for law enforcement or maybe even the NCIS," stated Nikolas.

## CASSIE ESPARAZA

A senior at Mater Dei, Cassie seized an opportunity for shadowing at ABC after her journalism teacher invited news anchor Ariel Wesler to visit her classroom. He mentioned to the class that they could contact him for a tour if they ever wanted to see the production of his news show. Months later, Cassie contacted Mr. Wesler to see if he would be open to participating in her Passion Project, where she would shadow him for 10 hours. After he agreed, there was no turning back. Cassie loved her experience so much she continued to shadow four hours a week and now gets to attend production manager meetings, review scripts, watch show

tapings, and learn about the control room and sound systems. She plans on majoring in Communications with a minor in Journalism at Loyola Marymount University this Fall. Her shadowing experience solidified Cassie's passion to pursue a career in Entertainment Journalism. She will continue with ABC throughout the summer, along with an internship with the Old Globe Theatre Summer Shakespeare Intensive Program. "Someday I hope to be an entertainment news reporter!" exclaims Cassie.



## ABELARDO L. RODRIGUEZ CETTO

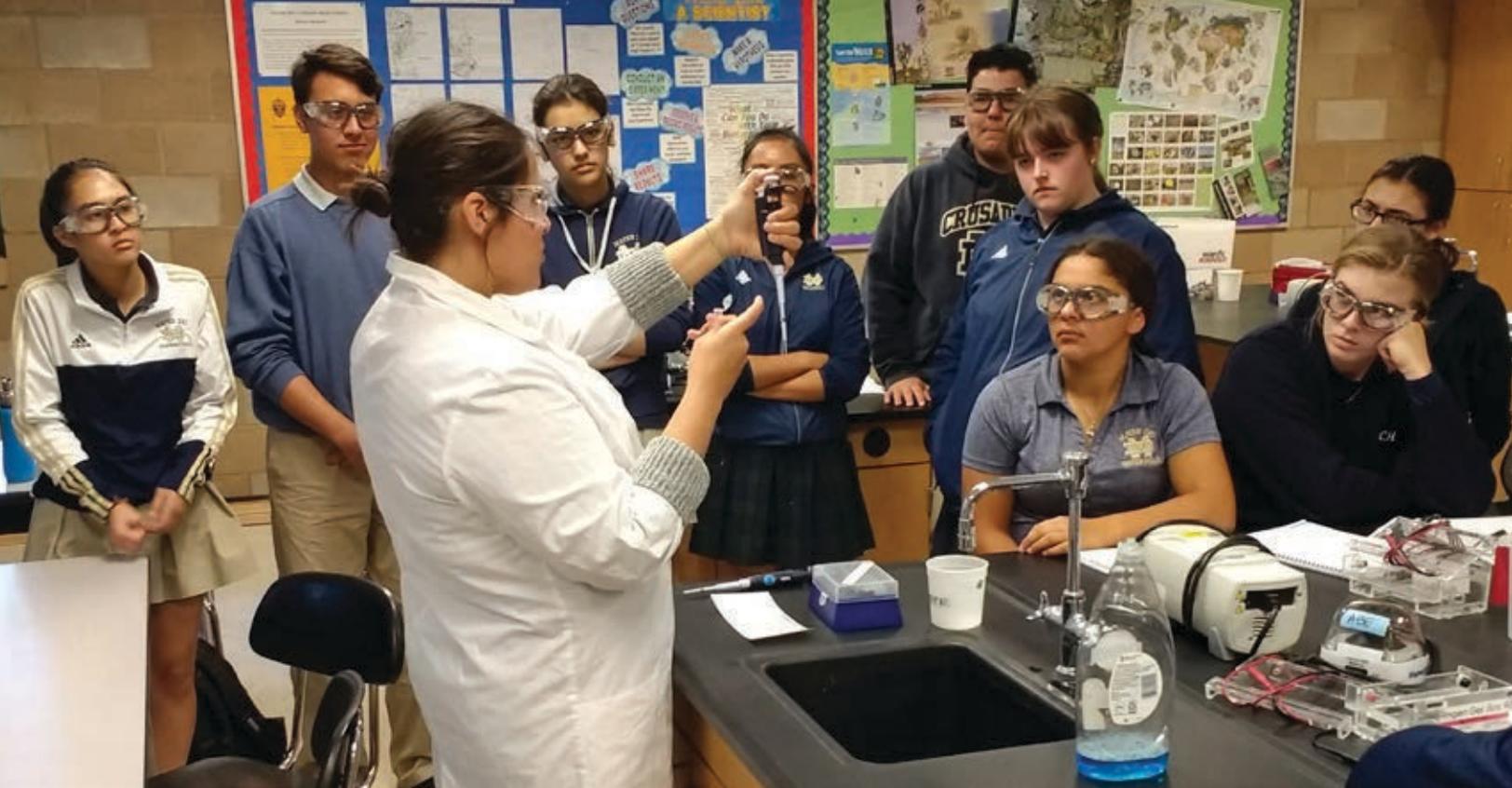
Making wine is in his blood and it's his passion. Abelardo, one of Mater Dei's upcoming grads, will start his college career as one of 20 students selected worldwide to attend Cal State Fresno's world-renown Enology program to study the science of making wine. Cal State University, Fresno is the first school to have

its own commercial winery on campus and it operates the largest school winery in the United States.

Abelardo comes from a very respected family of four generations of winemakers in Valle de Guadalupe, Mexico. LA Wine Cetto is known as one of the best wineries in Baja California, where Abelardo has interned over the past four summers in a variety

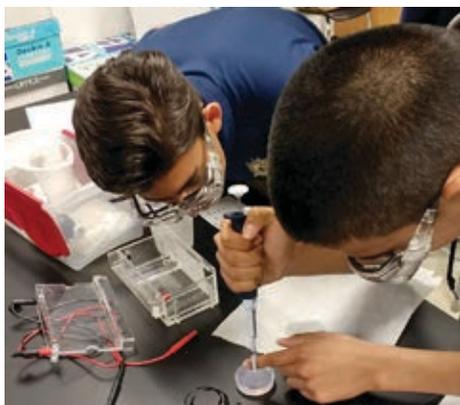
of areas including the cellar, quality control lab, as well as the vineyard. In 2017, at the age of 19, he became the youngest sommelier in Mexico. For his Science Academy research project, Abelardo examined the chemistry of sulfites in wine, and how sulfites improve the quality and life-span of wine. Abelardo's research revealed that sulfites in wine pose little to no health risk, whereby french fries contains about 12 to 13 times more sulfites than a bottle of red wine.

Currently, Abelardo is working with Argentinian master winemaker, Sebastian Suarez, to guide him in creating balanced wine blends. After graduating from Cal State Fresno, Abelardo plans to attend the University of Florence to Master in Viticulture which is the science, production, and study of grapes. He also plans to get certified as a sommelier in the US, as he already has in Mexico. "I'm grateful for all the teachers who have supported and encouraged me with my classwork and projects and who've helped me discover my passion and what I wish to study!"



## MOLECULAR BIOLOGY LAB BRIGHTENS STUDENTS' HEARTS AND MINDS

A couple of summers ago Noel Leon, one of Mater Dei's science and biology teachers, attended the Amgen Biotech Teacher Training Program offered through Miramar College. This intensive course has brought dozens of students at Mater Dei an experience few high school students ever receive.



Ms. Leon rolled the molecular biology lab out initially to a bio class last year. She then customized it for a Forensic class, whereby she provided a hands-on experience using gel electrophoresis or DNA fingerprinting. Students could see for themselves what forensic scientists do in a lab. "We were able to set up an actual crime scene, and

show how fingerprinting, hair analysis, DNA collection and ultimately DNA electrophoresis could help conclude which suspect was responsible for the crime," stated Ms. Leon.

This past semester, Ms. Leon expanded the lab to Science Academy students through one lab sequence called bacteria transformation. "This is an amazing lab that allows students to take bacteria, clone the DNA and transform it to show the phenotype of that DNA," Ms. Leon added. "We used genes from sea anemones, which are bright pink to transform the bacterial DNA. By transforming the bacterial DNA to include the gene that codes for the red fluorescent protein of the sea anemones



into bacteria, students were able to isolate the protein of interest which is the pink color. Every student had a control group and one with genes of interest that turned pink. If they had the pink bacteria, they were excited because they did a good job, successfully carried out the experiment, and were ultimately able to take their findings home with them – a bright pink liquid in a tube container."

Most high school students never get this kind of experience or even use these type of micro pipettes or other biotech tools before college. Students in the Science Academy are expanding their hearts and minds when it comes to science.

# THREE MATER DEI TEAMS RECEIVE AWARDS AT TWO COLLEGE-LEVEL HACKATHONS



## SDSU Big Data Hackathon

Last February, Science Academy students participated in the SDSU Big Data Hackathon, which took place over two weekends. The goal was to solve a public health problem for California using Big Data provided by the city. These data sets, consisting of statistics on people's Internet behavior and their browser and smartphone usage, are aggregated and organized to help form strategies that could lead to developing a winning app.

Each team had only five slides of a PowerPoint and five minutes to "sell" their idea to the judges – similar to SharkTank. MDCHS sent the only two high school student teams out of 22 participating teams to this event, and received two of the six awards presented.



The most innovative project idea was awarded to MDCHS Team "Watergirlz and 1 Boy" led by Dr. Suzanne Till. Her team included Fernanda Lutteroth, Sophia Jordan, and Joshua Narezo. The public health question "How can Californians maintain a daily health regimen?" was answered by the team: "Drink more water!" The team proposed a smartphone data collection app to collect data and location of paid and unpaid drinking water sources at schools

and regional parks, like Balboa Park. The data will be integrated into a geographic information system, and include photos of drinking water sources along with public



health data recommended by the Harvard School of Public Health. Dr. Till is currently working with the Blue Gold Water Task Force at SDSU to obtain funding to develop the software and implement this idea.

The MDCHS Team "Pathfinders" led by Mr. JP Gonzalez took the 3rd place overall award. His team included Sophomores Ana Cardenas, Adrian Carretero, and Jorge Tagle and addressed ways to navigate the public away from air pollution in order to minimize risks of pulmonary disease and exposure to emissions from traffic.

Similar to the Waze app algorithm, this team proposed an app that routes people to destinations through the best air quality, while also addressing the safest and healthiest routes. Individuals will be able to report tripping hazards, pot holes to local officials, and they can even get info on areas that have reported crimes, and receive routes that address data from city zone meters regarding pollutant concentrations due to weather.

## CSU San Marcos Women's Hackathon

Two months later on April 22, three

lady Crusaders, Morgan Quinlan, Kenna Gutierrez, and Rosalind Moore, went to CSU San Marcos to compete in their annual Women's Hackathon.

They competed against other high school and college students and won the "Originality and Impact" award. The MDCHS Science Academy girls designed and proposed a mobile app to help people eat healthier. Unlike the countless other dieting apps that focus on only counting calories or sugar, they went a step further by incorporating a data set from a peer-reviewed article, which tabulated the dietary load of advanced glycation end-products (AGEs) for hundreds of common food items.



The app would use filters to make recommendations for possible food substitutes to help consumers limit AGEs or other bad ingredients. Lastly, the proposed app would allow consumers to scan ingredient lists for hidden CRAP (calorie-rich, artificial dyes, and preservatives) ingredients. The result, of this innovative app brought another Hackathon win to Mater Dei Science Academy.

"We try to get these students exposure to what it is like in college. From 10th grade on, we treat them like college students," said Dr. Till.



## STUDENTS INSPIRE MATER DEI LEADERSHIP TO INSTALL FOUR NEW WATER HYDRATION STATIONS AROUND CAMPUS

Amorette Hernandez and Luis Cerna-Gomez were inspired to propose a healthier, environmentally safer and economically smarter way to stay hydrated on campus throughout the day. The two seniors presented the Hydration Station project to Mr. Rey and his staff as a way to encourage students to bring reusable water bottles to school that could be conveniently refilled with filtered water from four different stations strategically positioned throughout the campus.

The idea would ultimately improve the intake of water, offer a cleaner and cheaper way to access water and ultimately move Mater Dei to be more green or environmentally safe. "These Hydration Stations will get the attention of our students and ultimately help convince them

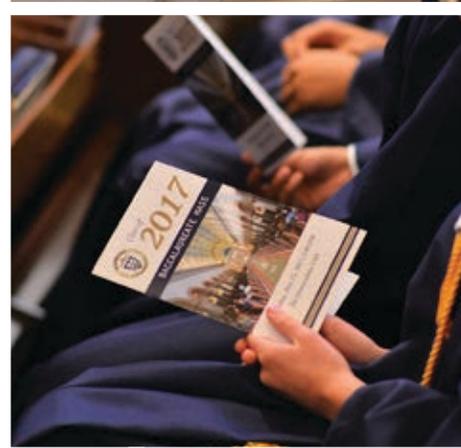


to change their behavior to get hydrated and be more environmentally conscious," said Ms. Hernandez. "We hope, by promoting it through social media that students will not only realize they can save \$1.50 on bottled water, but that they no longer need to worry about consuming water that can be chemically contaminated from plastic exposure in the sun. We are looking to improve the health of our students and our campus as a whole."

Drinking water is regularly tested and regulated by the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) while bottled water is not. Each year water agencies must provide a report telling you what contaminants are in your drinking water from the tap. The State of California is offering free water testing for all California schools.



# GIVING THANKS IN CELEBRATION



# CONGRATULATIONS Class of 2017



# CLASS OF 2017

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## Sergio Cuadra

Valedictorian Sergio Cuadra was accepted to Harvey Mudd, Notre Dame, the University of Colorado Boulder, Cal Tech, MIT, UCSD, and USD. He chose MIT. With the help of Mater Dei's Science Academy, Sergio was able to intern at USD in an organic chemistry lab where he conducted a variety of experiments and even got paid. Most interns worked the typical 9-5 work day, but Sergio loved his experience so much that he worked 6am to 6pm. Sergio, a Science Academy graduate, will be double majoring in Physics and Chemistry in order to pursue a career in Science. While in college, he plans to study abroad at one of the world's top science programs, then to attend grad school to get his PhD.

*"Mater Dei Science Academy helped me the most. Dr. Till was key in counseling me to apply to universities that fit my skill and interests. I'm grateful for all of her encouragement."*



## Quentin Frazier

Quentin had an impressive football career at Mater Dei and was enrolled in the Science Academy and received the Male Scholar Athlete of the Year award. He made a huge contribution to Mater Dei Football team since freshman year. While, at the time of this article, he was still considering University offers, he plans to continue to play at the college level and hopes to further his education by studying Business Administration and Management. He will continue to look for success with the help of teachers, his teammates, and football for as long as he can.

*"Mater Dei did a great job getting me prepared for college. I appreciated the support I received from my teachers."*



## Jenna Kruse

Jenna Kruse was awarded with the Female Scholar Athlete of the Year and Lady Crusader of the Year for her hard work at Mater Dei. On the varsity level, Jenna was active in water polo, softball, volleyball, and swimming. She was involved in ASB since freshman year and was elected ASB President senior year. As a Science Academy student, she worked for 7-weeks on a summer internship that motivated her to pursue a degree at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. In college, Jenna hopes to continue playing water polo and will be majoring in Business Administration with the goal to one day work in human resources and management and then ultimately own her own company.

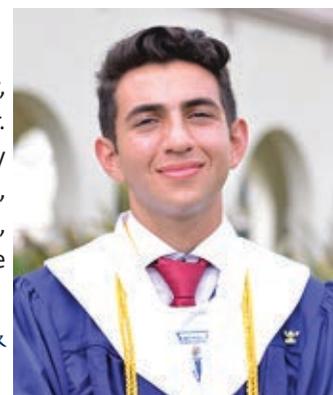
*"Mater Dei shaped me into a person who is able to communicate and work well with others. I learned great time management to juggle sports, AP classes, ASB, and personal time."*



## David Cooper

David Cooper was awarded with the Crusader of the Year. He was enrolled in the Science Academy, was involved in ASB since his Sophomore year, and was the ASB Executive Vice President Senior year. David was one of only 20 students nationwide selected to intern at the Chevron USC Frontier Energy Resources Camp last summer. He was accepted to Columbia, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Notre Dame, UCLA, USC, and USD. With the assistance of the Science Academy and the experience of the internship, David decided that he would like to study either Environmental Engineering or Environmental Science at USC. He plans to continue on to Grad school for Engineering or Environmental Law school.

*"I'm really grateful to Dr. Till, who helped me get focused on my field of interest and I look forward to this next chapter in my life."*





## Amorette Hernandez

Salutatorian Amorette Hernandez will be attending Notre Dame in the Fall to major in Chemistry and minor in either Business or Finance. Amorette was enrolled in many AP classes, the Science Academy, and played Varsity softball all four years. Amorette is also responsible for proposing the new Hydration Station project that will be installed around the campus to provide a healthier way to stay hydrated throughout the day. As a paid summer intern at UCSD, Amorette helped conduct research to find treatment alternatives for Type II diabetes. After college, Amorette hopes to either own and operate a pharmaceutical company or continue research for Type II diabetes.

*"Mater Dei encourages you to get involved, whether through sports or ways to better the campus or community. It's a great place to find your passion and do something beyond yourself."*



## Madelyn Tassiello

Madelyn is a leader with great determination. She transitioned from a public school to Mater Dei after overcoming a severe accident where she was told she would not be able to walk. Mater Dei provided Madelyn opportunities to embrace new experiences. Madelyn challenged herself to take a lot of honors and AP classes as well as enrolling in Science Academy. She was elected ASB Executive Treasurer, was a Campus Ministry retreat master, and a student ambassador. In 2016, she received the Matthew:25 Award from the Diocese of San Diego. Madelyn will attend UC Davis. After attending USD Stem Camp, she took an interest in Environmental Science and hopes to work in the future to improve sustainability.

*"Being at Mater Dei ultimately shaped me into the person that I am. I hope to leave a mark in College in some small way."*



## Myles Domingo

Myles was a community builder at Mater Dei. He started the school's broadcasting system MDTV and also joined the revived marching band where he played alto saxophone. As a Science Academy student, he participated in an eight-week engineering internship at USD studying biocomposites and the possible use of carbon dioxide to create biomedical applications to help bone growth and prevent anti-inflammation. He also participated in a number of Hackathons during high school. Myles has decided to go to UC Berkeley to major in Computer Science. He hopes to become a software developer for a large tech company in Silicon Valley and eventually start his own company.

*"I'm all about community and my experiences at Mater Dei have helped me to start new things and motivate others along the way. I look forward to doing the same at UC Berkeley."*



## Kevin Li Zhang

Kevin will be attending UC San Diego to study Mechanical Engineering. Kevin was involved in many clubs including Robotics, Engineers without Borders, and the Computer Science "Hack" Club. He was instrumental in helping the Robotics Club improve from bottom rankings to the regional competition of First Tech Challenge (FTC). Kevin also played tennis his senior year, golf his sophomore year and table tennis after school for five years. These experiences opened opportunities for Kevin to make friends from all over the world including the U.S., China, Europe and Mexico. Kevin hopes to continue his involvement at UCSD and ultimately find a job in engineering after he graduates.

*"These experiences have shaped my plans to pursue engineering. I hope to make new friends at college who are reliable and who can guide me through difficult times."*

# FAVORITE SPOTS ON CAMPUS

6  
5  
3

*Student Photos and Quotes by Eric Trus*

## 1 Egger Stadium



**Benjamin Kettlehake:**  
I enjoy playing soccer with my friends at Egger Stadium!



**Micah Scott:**  
I have great memories here, including winning the 2015 CIF State Football Championship.

## 2 Aquatics Pool



**Jenna Krueger:**  
I probably spend my time here at the Aquatics Pool. I teach Water Polo lessons and enjoy the sun and water.

## 5 Tech Lounge



**Erica Mora, Kristal Calilung, Trajan Dacanay, Andrew Sestega, & Marco Manzano:**  
It is nice to get in the Tech Lounge during the hot and cool days, and to interact with other seniors.

## 6 Fatima Court



**Carson G. and Zeke Oakley:**  
We hang out with our friends here. It's a nice spot for lunch, it has a nice sense of community. Mater Dei.



### 3 Aquinas Library



**Jeremiah Bishop:**  
I enjoy the quietness of the library while studying.

### 4 Senior Lawn



**James Hughes:**  
I love the great view of campus and how open the senior lawn is.

### 7 Main Entrance



**Sophia Jordan and John Estrada:**  
There are always fun events at the Fatima Court!

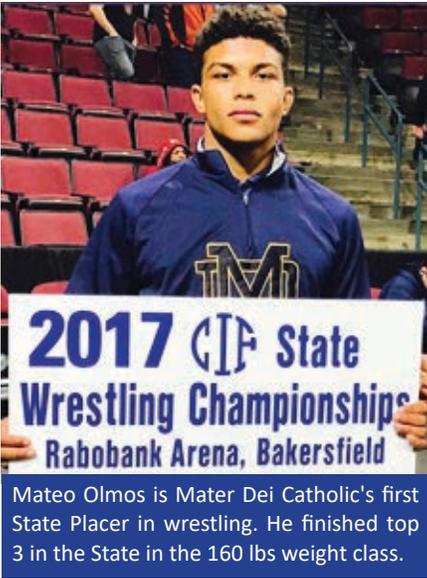


**Preston Muñoz:**  
Going through the gate resembles opportunity to a new start, to new friends, and to have fun!

use:  
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ing swim  
nd I just love  
nd the pool.

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community to  
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# MATER DEI SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS



## SOFTBALL TEAM WINS BIG WITH HONORARY PLAYERS PROGRAM



Coach Mike Centrullo & Kelly Lecker

Although sports are commonly known to have one winner and one loser, Mike Centrullo, coach of Mater Dei's women's softball team has developed a program where everyone involved wins. It is called the Honorary Players Program and the goal is for the team to find a young girl who is facing a challenging time and invite her to join the high school softball team.

This year's honorary player was a first grader named Kelly who suffers from cerebral palsy. Because of this program, Kelly gets to be a part of a team and a community, with seventeen athletes looking after her. She attends every game with her uniform and a smile on her face, ready to throw the first pitch. Kelly's family has also been impacted by this program, "I'm just so proud of her." Kelly's father Scott Lecker says, "You know the doctors said she would never be able to walk, talk or see, and for her to be where she is today, it's just phenomenal."

The team has been given a unique opportunity to learn outside of the classroom about how lucky they are. This program gives the players perspective that sometimes there can be more to life than a game. The team loves interacting with Kelly, who always has a smile on her face. They have adopted her as their little sister. This program is an all-around win and coach Centrullo hopes that other teams begin to embrace it.





## TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK FOR MATER DEI BASKETBALL

Mater Dei boys and girls basketball teams rise as one, as they both earned a spot in the California State Playoffs. In the first game of a doubleheader, the evening began with the Division I San Diego CIF Champion Crusader girl's team fearlessly battling JSerra by passing, shooting, driving to the hoop and relentlessly applying pressure, all before a loud spirited crowd. With hard work, determination, dedicated off-season preparation, and teamwork, this young team played like a group of veterans with an exciting win and the honor of advancing to the next round of state playoffs.

Next up, was a young, quick, explosive boy's team with amazing talent and tenacity, the Crusaders. Basketball Mater Dei style means unrelenting pressure defense, fundamental team basketball, and excitement. The Crusaders led most of the game, frustrating their opponents with their defense while entertaining the boisterous and animated student body. Above the rim rebounds, a few slam dunks and intense competition led to a thrilling game. Unfortunately, unable to hold off a late fourth quarter comeback, the Crusaders fell to Harvard-Westlake.



# VAPA: THE ARTS AT MATER DEI



by Alana Hurd



Mr. Marty Lafond



Yixuan Liu "Christy"

Mater Dei has made a mark in the area of science with its renown Science Academy, however, many people don't realize the breadth of classes it offers in the area of Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA). Whether enrolled in Art 1, Advanced Studio Art, Ceramics, Computer Graphics, Band, AP Art History, Drama, Music classes, and soon Photography and Video Production, students can receive a broad sampling of the 15 different VAPA classes at Mater Dei.

The computer graphics class has also made its mark by creating logos for various departments and clubs on campus. Mr. Marty



Lafond, one of the VAPA program teachers who heads up the art curriculum for the past two years said, "Any opportunity to support the rest of the school, we jump at it. We recently created a logo for the Mater Dei

Twitter page and will be working with the Science Academy and choir to transfer their logos into a silkscreen for t-shirts. We also produced the Spring Production's program and last year we created posters to promote the play."

Mr. Lafond added, "Our courses are all based on the California Standards for art, but allowing as much creative freedom as possible. Students are given a subject or topic, yet have a lot of room to figure out what style they want to incorporate and develop." For the surfboard design lesson, students explored military illustration, pop art, anime, fantasy and even realism.

Each week, students build concepts in a sketchbook and develop their own artistic style working with recurring themes and mediums. Assignments are typically open-ended so students can be original and creative. In the self-portrait/portrait assignment given to the Advanced Art Studio class, students created portraits using stamps with symbols that represented the person.

More than 50% Mater Dei students currently benefit from Music, Art, and Drama at Mater Dei. Mr. Lafond added, "We would love to expand our program to have every student take a VAPA class. We also work as a team and integrate lessons with other classes, so it opens the door for collaboration between classes."

## CHRISTIAN INSPIRED MURAL - STUDIO ART

The Studio Art students were assigned a mural painting intended to illustrate a Christian inspired theme. Students were to create an image that represented a personally significant Biblical teaching, religious icon, event or verse from the Old or New Testament.

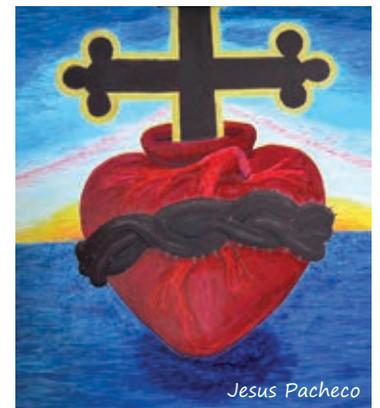


Shelby Finch

Students researched Biblical imagery, Biblical quotes, and verses that personally inspired them. They then developed a "rough draft" in pencil on paper. Several compositions were considered before starting the final mural.

The finished compositions were painted on wooden panels with acrylic paint. Before painting on the wooden panel, each Artist experimented with a variety of exercises related to color theory, painting techniques, and brush skills.

These paintings represent weeks of dedicated work on the part of all artists involved. The murals will be permanently installed at select locations on school grounds.



Jesus Pacheco

# INTERNATIONAL VAPA STUDENTS LEAVE THEIR MARK ON CAMPUS



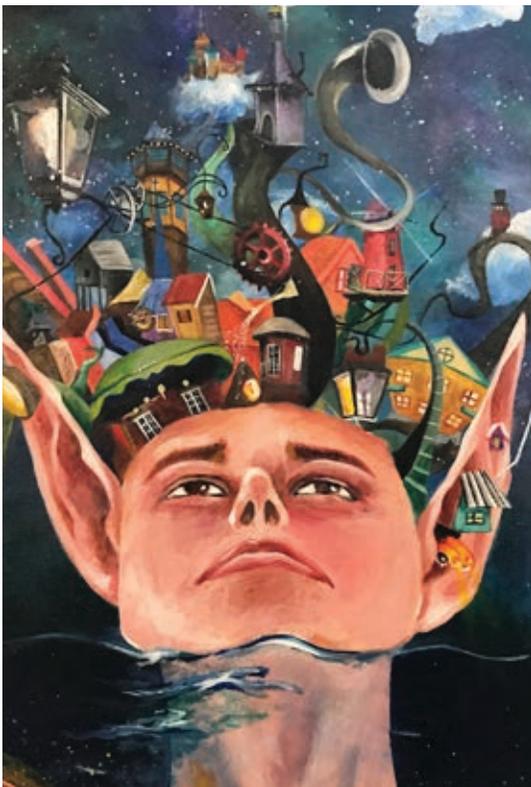
After spending years working in the VAPA program taking advanced studio art, international students and Seniors Yixuan Liu "Christy", Hyeju Cho "Joy", and Zhixin Huang "Jodie" (L to R above) from China and Korea collectively made their mark on the Mater Dei campus a few months ago. The trio completed a large mural placed next to the attendance office in broad view, showcasing the school's Crusader mascot.



"I had never painted a mural before," said Joy. "I finally did something for the campus that I am very proud of – especially since we are all Asian international students. We are proudly leaving our mark of gratitude for everything we received at Mater Dei," said Christy Liu. "When I signed my name yesterday, I was so anxious and excited," exclaimed Jodie Huang.



## CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION WINNER



International student and senior, Joy Cho, loved her experiences in VAPA so much she is majoring in Illustration at the Rhode Island School of Design in Fall 2017. She also recently won the national Congressional Art Competition for the 53rd district, and her winning painting is on display in the capital building in Washington DC. Her Painting is entitled True Leader.



# ACADEMIC HONORS

*First Honors - Grade Point Average of 3.8 and above*

## SENIORS

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Leonardo Aguilar-Lopez	Sergio Cuadra	Ana Patricia Felix-Ibarra	Roberto Jimenez	Andres Romero
Ana Alcantar	Tayra Curumilla	Paola Garcia-Carrera	Jenna Kruse	Steven Shoemaker
Micah Apatan	Alexis Diaz-Garibaldi	Javier Gomez	Ileana Lemos	Madelyn Tassiello
Ana Astiazaran	Myles Domingo	Miguel Guerrero-Medrano	Kevin Li Zhang	Sergio Villafranco
Hazel Barajas	Mary Kathleen Donivan	Austin Habib	Fernanda Lutteroth	Juan Pablo Villegas
Ezekiel Campos	Ruben Duran	Brighid Healy	Roy Emmanuel Medina	Peyton Zizzi
Eduardo Charvel	Jorge Escasan	Amorette Hernandez	Anthony Nguyen	
Bethany Colgrove	Cassandra Esparza-Villarreal	Chelsie Hernandez	Malia Noble	
David Cooper		Zongyu (Eddie) Huang	Sofia Papadakis	

## JUNIORS

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Elena Arnold	Pablo Hernandez	Enrique Marcilla	Enrique Ramirez	Jordan Wesson
Jonas Philip Bongulto	Aislin Hilgeman	Emily Miranda	Samantha Ruiz	Madison (O'Hara) Wickham
Nicholas Dell'Acqua	Natalia Jimenez	Brandon Moore	Alessandra Salas	Luoyu (Roy) Yang
Roman Flores	Vanessa Leon	Rosalind Moore	Manuella Sobol	
Dimitri Gianousopoulos	Cynthia Leon	Joshua Narezo	Jorge Tagle	
Carson Gorney	Liana Malunes	Eduardo Navarro Gomez	Hanna Taglinao	
Edward Hagerty	Zoe Manalo	Oscar Prado	Elena Valdes	

## SOPHOMORES

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Jasmine Riannah Adamos	Natalie Chavarria	Maria Garcia-Estreyer	Spencer Kacijancic	Nicholas Salisbury
Fernando Alcocer	Enrique Corona	Jonathan Gaytan	Andrew Landin	Jackson Salvestrini
Karlos Bautista	Ryan Cu	Cesar Gomez	Alfred Lopez	Paul Samson
Talejah Baxter	Edward De Leon	Jonathan Emmanuel Gomez	Isabella Molina	Phoebe San Pedro
Tristan Brown	Vincent Dobrawa	Alana Hurd	Alexia Morales	Arleth Santana
Karen Campos	Enrique Esparza-Villarreal	Sophia Jordan	Eduardo Nunez	Christian Silva
Adrian Carretero	John Estrada	Sophia Jorge	John Rodinec	Mariana Solares Bolaños
Madeline Castillo	Ryan Gapski	Edria Kabiling	Isabel Roji	Kathryn Zwick

## FRESHMEN

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Frances Nicole Alfonso	Daniella Campuzano	Oscar Gracias	Sabino Muro	Fernanda Serrano-Reyes
Kailey Araki	Christine Carey	Joseph Hagerty	Jordan Norman	Linda Solares Bolaños
Aaliyah Balagtas	Daniela Dalton	Ezekiel Isidro	Stephanie Otte	Mackenzie Tassiello
Jade Barajas	Kaylee Dundee	Nigel Aidan Jorge	Samantha Peter	Eric Trus
Joany Bayron	Samantha Firsht	Brianna Keller	Alena Ramirez	Alejandra Zepeda
Evan Besker	Gabriela Fonseca Luna	Reagan Koster	Mary Grace Reilly	
Jeremiah Bishop	Andrea Garibaldi Guerrero	Kyler Mamou	Hector Reyes	
Timothy-Ewart Boyd	Isabella Garibaldi-Guerrero	Hennessy Martinez	Sarah Salisbury	
Alexi Brown	Elia Garibaldi-Guerrero	Preston Munoz	Joseph Sandoval	

# The IMPORTANCE of Being EARNEST



Review by Brandon Moore  
Photos by Eric Trus

## MATER DEI PRESENTS "A QUINTESSENTIAL CLASSIC"

As I sat down in the school theater one March evening, I day-dreamed not of the play I was about to witness, but of the warmth of my bed, thirty miles away after another busy week. Suddenly, the lights dimmed, and a graceful melody drifted out from backstage. As the scene in front of me began to unfold, and the lavishly-dressed characters walked into full view, I was no longer sleepy. The Mater Dei Drama Department was beginning their 2017 Spring production, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, an 1895 comedic farce written by Oscar Wilde that has repeatedly received international recognition for more than a century.

As the student-actors, led by seniors Glenn Quiroga and Cassie Esparza and freshmen Andrew Crary, Amy Parra-Gonzalez, and Stephanie Otte, progressed through the three acts of the play, which underscores the absurdity of the customs of Victorian socialites. I couldn't help but notice the authentic nature of the production, which only added to the humorous plot and the students' superb stage presence.

The live music was composed and performed offstage by aspiring pianist Kyle Myers, and the costumes a convincing representation of nineteenth-century English fashion. In addition, all the actors, under the direction of Mrs. Rebecca Brown and 2016 Mater Dei graduate Daisy Powell, took the time to learn a British accent in their more than two months of preparation before the show—no doubt a feat that required patience and teamwork among the cast and crew.

As senior Victoria Ramos-Ramirez, a member of the production team, said, "It was an honor to work with the cast and crew of this show. They're so passionate about their roles as actors and students." This passion turned into an overwhelming success for the play, described by Mrs. Brown as "a quintessential classic."

For many student actors, *The Importance of Being Earnest* will definitely not be their last performance. Crary, who played the role of Algy Moncrieff, has no plans to give theater up, saying, "My plan is to continue with drama after high school because, no matter what, it will always be in my heart."



## MATER DEI LAUNCHES NEW SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLASS THIS FALL

*"You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore."* Christopher Columbus

Steve Smith has the quintessential entrepreneurial spirit and it's contagious! A former pioneer of High Tech Middle school, Mr. Smith will be bringing that spirit to a new class offered this Fall called Social Entrepreneurship. The idea of the class began in 2003, when Mr. Smith, who helped open High Tech Middle School as an IT guy quickly found his niche teaching 6th graders how to use technology and display their project-based work.

His first Entrepreneurship in Technology class integrated technology training, Microsoft and Adobe products, project-based learning and business development. Within three years of launching this class, he created a co-op, whereby high school kids would mentor middle school students.

"Kids don't realize they all have the ability to start their own businesses without any training," said Mr. Smith. "Our new Social Entrepreneurship class will unleash their potential to make their dreams come to life."

Mater Dei's course will include six three-week blocks that focus on various elements of what it takes to launch a business. They begin with a writing assessment piece.

**storybird**   
Art Inspired Storytelling

Students are charged to write a children's storybook using Storybird, an online app that helps users to build and publish your own book online. Once the book is created and published, students then have to market it by donating it to a library or school. This teaches them how their work can positively affect others in the community, and it opens the dialogue



about the world of 501c3 organizations. "We want them to think not just about me and my wallet, but about how the 501c3 world could be a place they might want to eventually venture into," said Mr. Smith.

In the second three-week block, students get experience working with veterans from Pixar to learn how a professional studio publishes.



These Pixar mentors will give students a true understanding of how to tell a story and market it, from concept to storyboarding to delivery. They will also learn how to bring a story to the big screen – learning about film and sound. Every student will have their own Google and YouTube account for students to learn virtually from professionals around the globe who have specific expertise using social media.

The next block focuses on teaching students about television reporting. A Roadtrip Nation ex-employee who had behind-the-scene experience will work with students on creating and editing a 2 ½ minute news interview.

They will learn interviewing skills, sound, and editing to create this news piece. Roadtrip Nation helps people truly understand their passion and what they



want to do with their lives going forward. The subject of the interview will be the inspiration for a new business that the student will launch.

Block 4 is dedicated to developing the idea of this new business, researching feasibility for success and writing a business pitch. Block 5 delves into creating an actual business plan including development of a business name, license, bank account, etc. Then, during the last three-weeks students make their business ideas come to life by putting their business online, building a store, optimizing the site with SEO and testing to launch.

While this is all taking place, fearless leader Steve Smith will be working on raising capital for seed funding these businesses. "All of the money that comes in from the children's books is used to launch the student's businesses and a portion of what they make will go back to a 501c3... everybody wins!" exclaimed Mr. Smith.

The last piece of this multi-faceted learning experience takes place around a circle. Students get the opportunity for assessment of their boss, Mr. Smith.

## INTERNATIONAL REACH: CRUSADER SERVES OTHER YOUTH THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

As members of an academic community founded on the principle of faith-based service, Mater Dei students work hard throughout the year to give back to those in need in the San Diego-Tijuana metropolitan area. One senior, O'Hara Wickham, has redefined the meaning of such service, and through her creation of a Junior Optimist Club on campus, and her leadership position in Junior Optimist International (JOI), she has extended the reach of the Crusader family to hundreds around the world.

When O'Hara was a middle school student, she witnessed firsthand the impact of the Junior Optimist group, an extension of the Optimist community clubs widely known throughout the United States, on families coping with their children's cancer diagnosis. After delivering baked goods to families one day at Rady Children's Hospital, a young mother approached her, held her hand, and told her, "Seeing young children like you come and do all this work for us, truly brings light at a very dark time."

Realizing the impact of her actions, O'Hara became motivated to continue them. At Mater Dei, she has done so by creating a chapter of JOI, advised by Head Counselor Mrs. Marissa Meda (left), and over the course of three years has worked with fellow students to raise more than \$12,000 for childhood



cancer research, donated to the Johns Hopkins Childhood Cancer Research Program, through a series of community outreach events. O'Hara has not stopped there, however. Starting in October, she assumed the role of president in JOI, overseeing all Junior Optimist Clubs in 19 countries. Under her leadership, JOI has gained almost 900 new members and 45 new clubs.

As O'Hara enters senior year, she has no plans to scale down her efforts to serve others through the Optimist Club, stating, "The Junior Optimist Club isn't just a club. It's a part of you that strives to give back to those not only in your community, but to all throughout the globe." *Article by Brandon Moore*



## MS. K'S WORLD FICTION CLASSES ARE SMILING



It is said that a book can take you to other worlds. Reading *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini did that and more for Ms. Kelleher's World Fiction classes. The students found themselves in Afghanistan in the early 70's where a young boy, Hassan, had a cleft palette. Some students did not know what this was so Ms. K suggested going to Smile Train, an acclaimed charity which makes cleft palette surgery possible for the poorest of the poor throughout the world. Just as Hassan was able to have his deformity corrected, the seniors donated \$250, enough money so that one child could also have this surgery. Because of them, one precious child will be able to smile. So *Kite Runner* not only took the students to another world, it was the impetus for them to make the world a little bit happier. Javier Gomez sums it up simply, "We are all glad we could help."



PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR NEXT YEAR'S GOLF TOURNAMENT ON SUNDAY, APRIL 29, 2018

*Thank you*  
to our volunteers, players and sponsors who helped to make our 40th Annual Golf Tournament a huge success. Special thanks to our title sponsor Frontera International and the Eastlake Country Club for their support.





# 2017 DISTINGUISHED CRUSADER AWARD

*The purpose of the Distinguished Crusader Award (DCA) is to honor and recognize Crusader Alumni and Crusader Friends that have given back to their faith and community and/or Marian Catholic and Mater Dei Catholic High Schools in significant ways either as alumni and members of the community.*

## *Maria Tollefson*



Mrs. Maria Tollefson has spent most of her career in service of our Diocese. She began teaching in 1962 in the Buffalo, New York public school system as a high school science teacher. In 1966 she moved to San Diego and taught science at St. Augustine High School in 1966-1970. She was the first full-time woman teacher. There she met her husband Jim, also a teacher at Saints, and they married in 1968. When she returned to San Diego, she taught at Rosary High School from 1974 until 1977 when it closed.

Mrs. Tollefson was at Marian High School from 1977-1994. She taught honors biology, anatomy physiology and also was a counselor for two years and vice-principal for 10 years. In 1994 she moved to St. Rose of Lima as principal until 2012. She had the wonderful opportunity to be part of the team that was involved in the construction of the new school building. She then became principal at Sacred Heart Academy in Ocean Beach for one year in 2012-2013, when she, unfortunately, had to close the school.

Mrs. Tollefson currently serves as principal at St. Didacus. She is active in both the St. Rose and St. Didacus Parishes. In 2008 she received the San Diego Diocesan Sr. Claire Patrice Fitzgerald Catholic Leadership Award. During this time she also taught Catholic Faith class at MCRD for 22 years, served as state treasurer and president of the California Scholarship Federation from 1980-1984 and coordinator of the Diocesan Junior High Academic Decathlon for the past 21 years.

She has two Marian alumni children—Jimmy '87 and Michelle '89, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. We thank and honor Mrs. Tollefson for her many, many years of dedicated service to our Marian and Mater Dei communities.

## *Lee and Tess Blair*



Marian/Mater Dei Catholic High Schools have been blessed with many people who helped make “our” school a great school! Lee and Tess Blair are certainly in that category.

They first came on board back in the Marian days when Dr. Estelle Kassebaum invited them to assist with our Parent Association Board and served as President of the board at both schools. It was not soon after that the PA Board was a vibrant entity at Marian. With the board members time, talent and effort in assisting Marian with so many projects, especially the Mardi Gras, Marian became a buzz word in the South Bay.

Lee and Tess had the distinct opportunity to participate in both schools, due to David '00 and Michael '03 graduating from Marian Catholic and Teresa '11 graduating from Mater Dei Catholic. Prior to their arrival at Marian/Mater Dei Catholic, they were also very involved in working with St. Charles School as their children attended St. Charles before attending Marian/Mater Dei Catholic.

Even now with their children graduated, they still carry on their attitude of service via their support and participation in the Dr. Estelle Kassebaum Scholarship Program at Mater Dei Catholic. You could say they are the reflection and personification of what it means to be a part of the “Catholic Education Experience!”

The Crusader faculty, staff, students, parents, and administration will forever be in debt for the service Lee and Tess provided in making Marian/Mater Dei Catholic a wonderful place to be. They truly made an impact on the Crusader community!

# CRUSADER CORNER



## *Dennis Seely '67*

Dennis spent 20 years in the Army and approximately 15 years as a high school and community college teacher. Between these two careers, he was the Press Secretary for a U.S. Congressman. In addition to his Bachelor's degree in Speech and Theater, he earned a Master's of Science and a Ph.D. in Communication. He has had a life-long love of travel which he still pursues. He has visited every western European country plus countries formerly behind the Iron Curtain; Middle Eastern countries; African countries; countries in the Far East; plus, Canada, Mexico and Central America.

His second hobby is motorcycling. In the course of 25 months, he rode in all 50 states including riding to and from Alaska. He makes at least one long distance trip each year and just completed his second ride to the four corners of the mainland United States, which lasted 38 days and covered 10,734 miles. He is also an accomplished photographer, having had his pictures published in numerous publications over the years. He is married to the former Rita June Carroll, whom he met while serving at Fort Sill, Oklahoma in the 1970's. He and Rita now live in Las Vegas, Nevada



## *Fr. Bernardo Lara '07*

Father Bernardo Lara is currently an Associate Pastor of St. Mark's Church, in San Marcos. Fr. Bernardo Lara grew up in Tijuana but attended Marian Catholic High School. After leaving a career as a Radio and Television host, he was ordained a Deacon in 2014 before becoming a priest in 2015.

In addition, he is involved in a number of extracurricular activities such as teaching

Theology for the Diocesan Institute, writing a monthly column for the Spanish section of the Diocesan newspaper (La Cruz del Sur) and hosting a weekly radio show.

This past May, ten years after graduating from Marian, Father Lara celebrated Baccalaureate Mass for the Class of 2017 in The Immaculata Church at the University of San Diego. This was a very special and proud moment for our Crusader Family.



## *Leticia Polanco '89*

A lot has happened in the almost 30 years since Leticia Polanco (Aguilar) graduated from Marian high school, she received a B.A. from UC Santa Cruz and her M.D. degree from Boston University School of Medicine. She completed her residency at the Scripps Family Medicine Residency Program. She is now a Board-Certified Family Physician. Leticia and her husband have served the South Bay community for over 17 years and they recently celebrated the one-year anniversary of their new faith-based office,

South Bay Primary Medical Group. They have the privilege of providing health care to both our patients and community with a focus on quality care and access.

It is with great excitement and anticipation that they have Calista, their oldest daughter, start her studies at Mater Dei. They encourage her to keep God at the center of her life and to take advantage of all this wonderful school has to offer. They know that Calista will have as great an experience.

# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



## *Rocio Hodges '81*

Rocio González Hodges '81 has been the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at Mater Dei Catholic High School since the school opened in 2007. She has a B.A. in Business Administration and Accounting from the University of San Diego and was Controller at several food export companies before coming to Mater Dei.

Rocio was active in the labor movement, fighting for the fair treatment of employees. She has a Certificate in Translation and Interpretation from UCSD. Rocio and husband, John, have been happily married

for 31 years and have two daughters, Aubrey '05 and Amanda '07. Aubrey has a B.A. in Professional Photography and works at the Diocese of San Diego Office for Schools. Amanda has a B.S. in Advertising and works for a digital marketing agency.

Rocio feels forever blessed and recognizes the immense sacrifice her parents Manuel and Elvia made to provide a priceless Catholic education for all their children. She continued that tradition with her daughters and is truly grateful to be a part of the Marian/Mater Dei Family.



## *Jason (Jay) Myers '09*

Jason Myers '09 is currently the kicker for the NFL Jacksonville Jaguars and he is finishing up his third Off-season Training Activity (OTA) and Veteran Mandatory Minicamp sessions, capping off an extremely busy off-season.

Jason married Ms. Katie Glomb in March here in San Diego, before returning to Jacksonville for pre-season workouts. Before reporting to 2017 Pre-season

Camp, Jason will be traveling back to San Diego to continue his preparation for the upcoming season, by working with his personal kicking coach, Mike Husted.

On a personal note, he will be attending a wedding of a fellow Mater Dei Alum, as well as becoming a Godfather to one of his sister's twin girls. His sister, Nikki (Myers) Wilcoxon '06, was a 2016 inductee to the Mater Dei Hall of Fame.



## *Anita Jimenez '77*

Anita has been busy planning the 40th reunion for Marian High School's Class of 1977, along with her classmates Esperanza Lam, Allen Gates, Gaby Orozco, Chris Pennington, Martin Bernardy, Mike Ordermatt, Adele Pettit, and Barbara Jimenez. Anita has also recently gone back to school to pursue a career as a veterinarian technician and plans on graduating in 2019.

Anita is thankful for the people in her life: three adult children: two beautiful daughters and one handsome son, and looks forward to someday having grandchildren. She is appreciative of all the opportunities in her life, her experiences at Marian High School which motivated her to continue to love and believe in the creator and to stay humble.

*If you would like to share your story with our community, please email our Alumni Director, Mrs. Erin Link '01, at [elink@materdeicatholic.org](mailto:elink@materdeicatholic.org)*



## MATER DEI RECEIVES RE-IMAGINE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AWARD AT 3RD ANNUAL BISHOP CIRILO FLORES CATHOLIC EDUCATORS' BANQUET

John Galvan presented Mater Dei with the Re-Imagine Catholic Schools Award on Thursday, April 27, 2017 at the 3rd Annual Cirilo Flores Catholic Educators' Banquet. This award honored a school that recognizes the needs and interests of the 21st century student. Galvan stated, "In preparation for becoming a one-to-one school, Mater Dei took great pains and steps to research the process and provide teachers with professional development appropriate to their field. In addition to providing students with laptops, Mater Dei also revamped the study skills course into an academic and technological literacy course

which became a required course for freshman. This class teaches not only time management and other study skills, but also technological basics. ATL became a class where students learned about digital citizenship and how to successfully use technology in their core classes as well as their personal life. This basic course is in addition to the more advanced courses Mater Dei offers to



students who are more inclined; for example, the school's news broadcast program, online newspaper, coding class and computer graphics. We congratulate Mater Dei for their outstanding efforts." In addition to this award, Steve Heineman and Estela Gonzalez were also recognized for their 10 years of service.



**1960**

Founding of Marian High School

**2007**

New Mater Dei Campus Opens

**48**

Acre Campus

**72**

Classrooms

**22**

Sports Teams

**4**

State Titles



**29**

CIF Titles

**92**

League Titles

**19**

Clubs on Campus

**36**

Average # of Volunteer Service Hours Per Student Annually

**82**

**2017 SUMMER INTERNSHIPS**

(partial listing)

Alcott Infancy Program, Psychology  
 Avanti Derma, Dermatology  
 Aviation Careers Camp, Aerospace Engineering, Aviation, Environmental Science & Pharmacy  
 Dr. Sanicolos, Podiatry  
 Faces Plus, Plastic Surgery, Medicine  
 Grossmont College, Theatre, Costume Design & Construction  
 NOAA, Oceanography  
 Old Globe Summer Shakespeare, Performing Arts  
 RH Fleet, STEM Education  
 Sally Ride Camp, Geosciences  
 San Diego County Sheriffs Explorer Academy, Law Enforcement  
 SDSU, Geographic Information Systems  
 Speech Tree, Speech Pathology

UCSD Hospital, Health Sciences  
 UCSD Medical, Health Sciences  
 UCSD Oncofertility, Cancer Research  
 UCSD Pharmacy Camp, Botany & Pharmacy, Medicine  
 UCSD School of Pharmacy, Biomedical research, Marine Biology, Nanotechnology  
 USC Energy Camp, Energy & Engineering  
 USD Env. Science Camp, Environmental Science & Pharmacy, Planning  
 USD Pharmacy Camp  
 USD, Dr. Clark, Organic Chemistry  
 USD, Dr. Darlymple, Engineering  
 USD, Dr. Hohman, Immunology  
 USD, Dr. Iovine, Chemistry  
 USD, Dr. Tally, Marine Science  
 USD, Dr. Walther, Fluvial geomorphology



CLASS OF 2017

ACCEPTED TO NEARLY

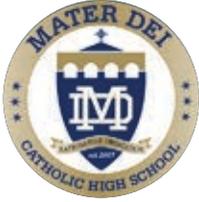
**200**

UNIVERSITIES WHICH INCLUDE:



Northeastern University





Mater Dei Catholic High School  
1615 Mater Dei Drive  
Chula Vista, CA 91913  
Phone 619.423.2121  
[www.materdeicatholic.org](http://www.materdeicatholic.org)

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Permit No. 751

## MDCHS ADMISSION DATES FALL 2017

**November 8**  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Visitation Day

**October 22**  
Open House

**Daily**  
Shadow Opportunities

For information or to schedule a school tour, call Mr. Roy Vasquez, Director of Admissions  
at (619) 423-2121 x106 or email: [rvasquez@materdeicatholic.org](mailto:rvasquez@materdeicatholic.org)